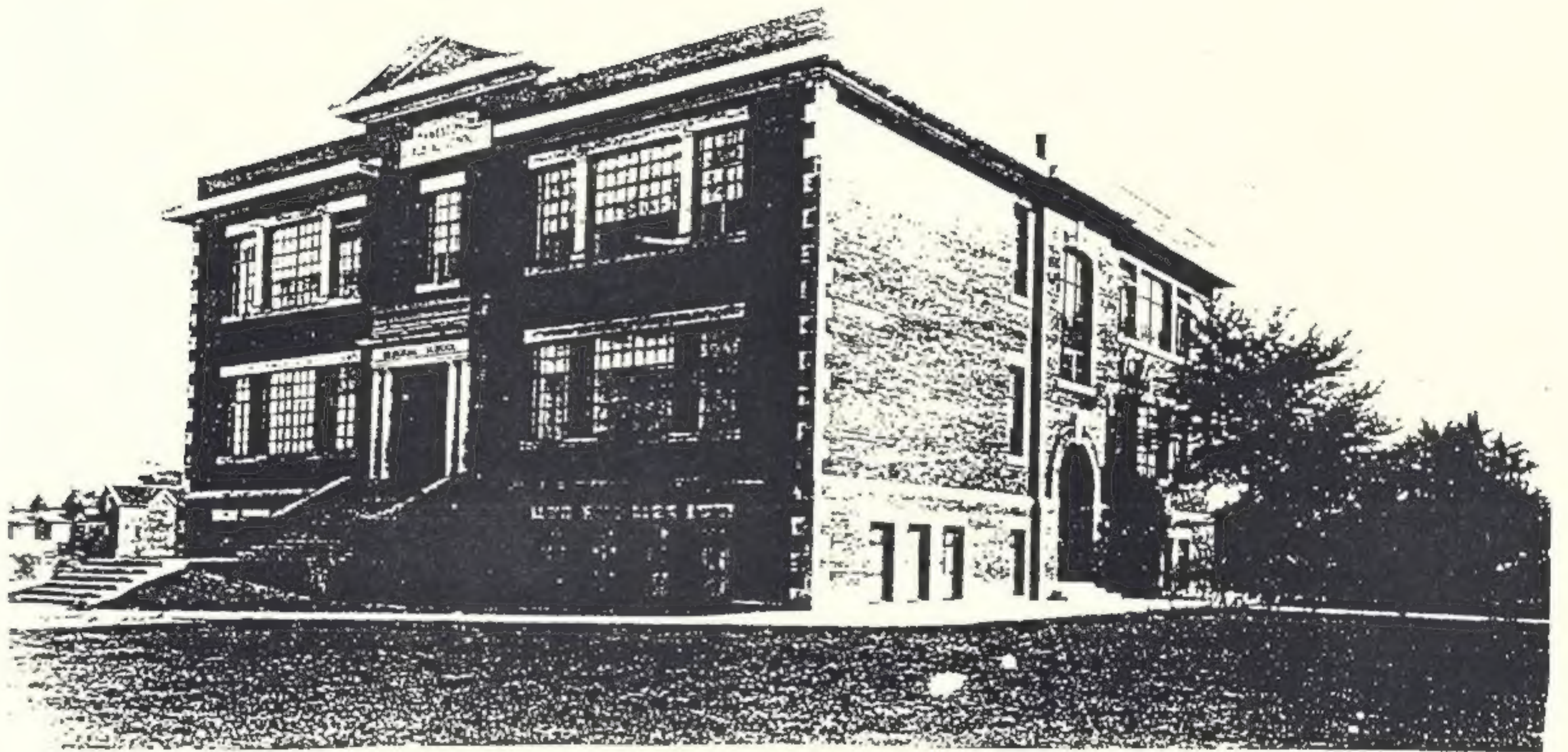


A Pictorial History Of

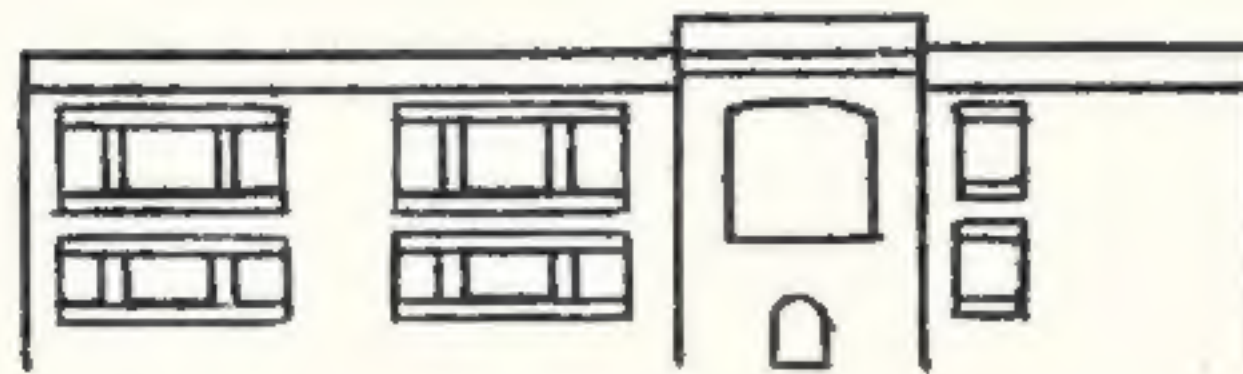
Weston Memorial



by Steven
Preston

WESTON MEMORIAL

1919



Dedicated to
Bruce Chapman,
without whom none
of this would have
been possible, and
for being a great
friend. Also to my
Mom and Dad for
their hard work
S.P.

A BRIEF HISTORY OF WESTON MEMORIAL SCHOOL

In February, 1919, a by-law proposing a new school to be built was prepared and presented to the ratepayers for their approval, but to the great surprise of the School Board, it was voted down.

Undaunted by this vote of disapproval, the Board, with the help of Town Council, went ahead with the building of Memorial Public School, at a cost of approximately \$60,000. The cornerstone was laid by The Minister of Education, The Honourable H. J. Cody, in July of 1919. S. B. Coon and Son were architects and supervising contractors.

At first, the name of the school was Maria Street Public School, as Queens Drive was called Maria Street at that time, and the front of the school faced that street. The name changed to Memorial Public School because the name of the street had been changed and the school was dedicated as a memorial to the people of Weston who died in the First World War.

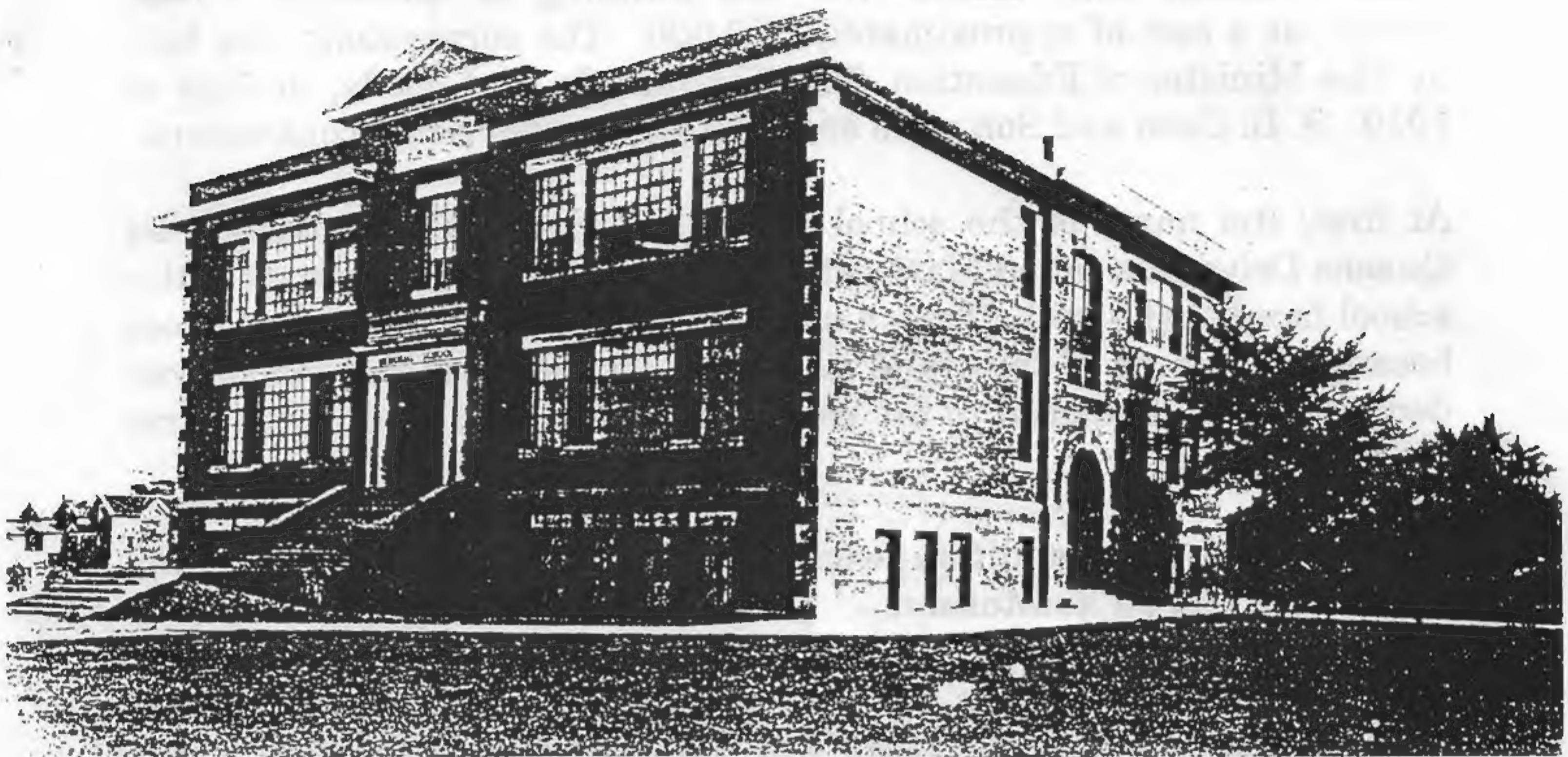
In 1929, the first addition was made to the school, adding four classrooms and an auditorium.

In 1965, construction on a new gymnasium was started on the school in the junior (boys) yard. There was a kitchen beside the gym which for a time was used as the French room by the school's French teacher, because there was no room in any other part of the school.

In 1968, another addition was added to the back of the school, which added six new classrooms, including two kindergartens.

During the late 1960's, a new stairwell was added to the John Street side (back) of the school, including an entrance, which made that end of the school become the front.

When the school came under the direction of the Board of Education for the Borough of York, they wanted to call it "York Memorial Public School", but there was already a "York Memorial" at that time, so the name "Weston Memorial" was chosen.



FORMAL OPENING - Wednesday, April 7th, 1920

The following article appeared in the "The Times and Guide" on Wednesday, April 14th, 1920:

On Wednesday night, the Weston Public School was opened amid all the glories that were indeed most fitting for the occasion. It was indeed a most notable event, and one that will be remembered and spoken of for many years and held up as an accomplishment to be followed by other School Boards throughout the country.

The Weston Board of Education is indeed to be congratulated upon their efforts. Weston can well be proud of the school that the Board has given them. It is not only a well built school, fitted with everything that goes to make up a real school and equipment, it not only has all the most improved up to date means of lighting, ventilation, blackboards, desks, heating and other essential points, but it has these and has been built within the estimated price that was stated when the Board asked for the money. This is indeed the one great thing that the citizens of Weston stated that the Board could not do. One wonders when they see the equipment, the workmanship, the fittings, the building, the three acres of land and the proposal to fit of this land for the school, how the Board ever did the work upon the original estimated price. It was due to the excellent work that the Board put into the details of the whole question. This was not only the oversight of the building operation or the buying of the material and equipment or the purchasing of the land, but it was the consideration that was given in the early arrangements for the plans. It was the careful study given by the Board to all the small details and the following up of those details and making all parties live up to the letter of their contract that has given to this school section this fine school.

The building is set upon three acres of ground at the south east corner of Maria and Pine Streets. It faces Maria Street and is 78 feet by 82 feet. The front entrance leads you into a large spacious hall with entrances from the east side for the boys and entrances from the west side for the girls. From this hall the four classrooms open. These classrooms are 24 feet by 32 feet with 12 1/2 foot ceilings. The light comes from the left of the scholars in all the rooms and only one way. The blackboards are so angled as to give the best results for light and the eyes of the children. The cloakrooms are so ventilated that all odours from damp clothes are drawn off by a flue in the rooms and by the other ventilating system. Between the two rooms there is a small room fitted up that opens out into the large centre hall. These are

fitted up as rest rooms or rooms for the teachers. The lighting system is good all over the building and the fixtures give the finishing touch to the rooms and halls. The rooms on the upper floor have not yet been fully equipped, but will be ready as the rooms are required. The basement is well fitted. Two large rooms are available for play room when the weather is wet. There is a large room about 72 feet by 30 feet that is now being fitted as a room for physical and manual work. The whole building is laid out so that every available inch of space is utilized and nothing is wasted. The building is one that will stand as a type for model school buildings for some time. The architects, S. J. Coon and Son, Toronto, have developed a plan of building that is most economical in construction and at the same time gives the desired spacious rooms and equipment. Since the accepting of this contract the firm has had several others given to them.

The total cost to date for this is as follows:

School site, 3 acres	\$12,000.00
Nine contracts for work	46,985.00
Sundry accounts	<u>946.87</u>
Total to date	\$59,931.87

Receipts are:

Sale of debentures	\$62,606.92
Rents, interest, etc.	<u>1,148.11</u>
	\$63,755.03

There are some other items yet to be accounted for such as the sale of the building on the ground, which has realized a good price. There are also a few items with regard to fixing of grounds and other incidentals that will have to be met. But the whole amount of money voted by the town will be applied to the school and also the honour rolls that are to be erected and the memorial tablet that was unveiled. For this the town of Weston will not be asked to vote any more money. Those who had stated that the work would not be done will now have to acknowledge that the Weston Board of Education have done the work and done it well.

The honours for the official opening were held in the large room in the basement of the school. Some 100 people were crowded into this room. Those who came early were fortunate in securing seats, but many others had to stand. The room was very prettily decorated with flags and lanterns, lit by electric lights. This work was done by our local electricians, MacInnes Bros. On the platform the Board had an orchestra present, which entertained those present until the speaker took the platform. The chairman, Mr. R. J. Flynn, of the Board

Education, presided. In opening in his usual efficient manner, welcomed all present and introduced the speakers of the evening. The Mayor, John Gardhouse, gave the speech of welcome. Warden J. M. Gardhouse, Reeve of Weston told of the work of getting the money and the improvements made during the years since he was a member of the Board. Rev. Hughes-Jones gave a statement of the expenses and stated that all the money voted would be spent on the school. Mr. S. B. Coon, the architect, spoke of the harmony and co-operation that he received from the Board. Then Mr. A. L. Campbell in his usual polished style with well chosen English and well rounded phrases, made a short resume of the work done by the members and staff of the school, the council, the Board and in the absence of Dr. Waugh, formally opened the school.

In part, Mr. Campbell said:

"Education will bring about a more equitable distribution of wealth, it will increase the production, it will raise the ideas of work as an honourable thing for man to participate in. The great fallacy that is now raging, namely that the happiest man is the one who has the least to do will be dissolved. Then the condition will be changed and work will be looked upon as not only necessary for a living, but the general happiness of mankind. Education will prepare us for work and cause us to set aside all the clap-trap that say work is drudgery and slavery. It is education that holds the key to all the industrial troubles. How crucial a thing it is for the building of a nation that our boys and girls should be moulded as individuals in mind, body and soul as workers practically trained to use their hands and intellect. Nor should we be unmindful of the soul without which the whole structure is of little avail."

"Canada has increased her responsibilities. To-day, as a result of the signing of the treaty, we are looked upon as one of the smaller nations of the world. Our autonomy has been established. It was won for us upon the fields of Flanders. Our men were well drilled, were well developed, had initiative. These are the boys that attended our schools in Old Ontario. We did not win the war still our Canadian Corps was there at the crucial moment and never failed when called upon."

He then unveiled the tablet upon which was inscribed the following:

1914 1918

This tablet is erected by the Weston Board of Education in memory of
the boys of the Weston Public School who answered the call of duty
and made the supreme sacrifice during the great war:

Lieut. Robert Allan M.C., M.M.

Sergt. Leonard Allan

Lance Corp. Gordon Campbell

Pte. Reginald Conron

Lieut. B. Launcelot Cumpston

Lieut. Gordon Hamilton

Pte. Walter A. Parry

Sap'r Wilfred F. Pearen

Pte. Russell A. Potter

Gnr. Charles M. Pratt

Trooper Russell V. Pratt

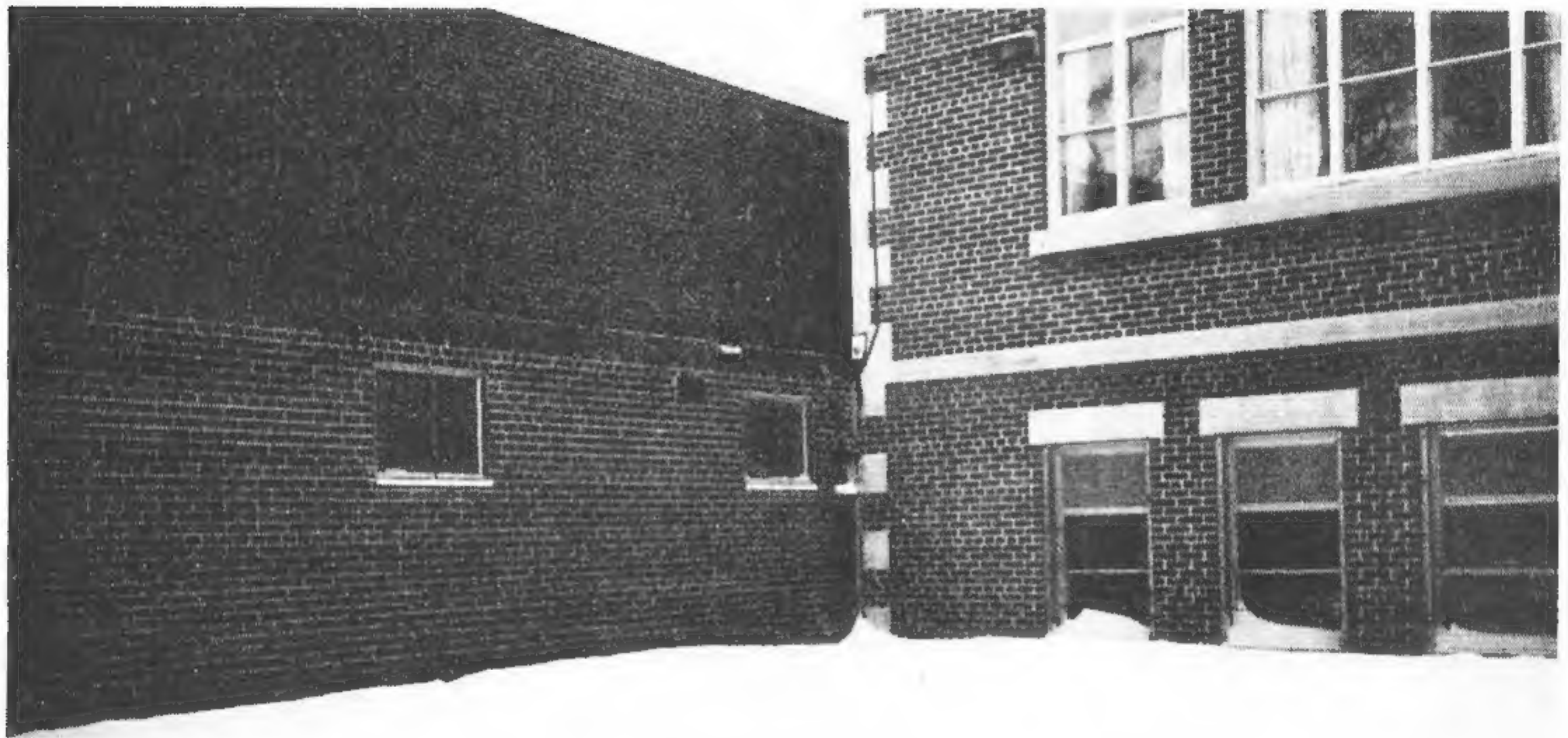
Avr. Stafford M. Pritchard

Pte. Allan Wade

Pte. Ernest Witty

"Their name liveth for evermore."

CORNERSTONES



This is where the gym and original section join. The gym overlaps the 1919 cornerstone, so that it says "919".



This is a close-up of the 1919 cornerstone. As you can see, an attempt was made not to cover the cornerstone (unsuccessfully).



This is the 1929 cornerstone. The first addition to the school was in 1929.

1919



This is the old front when it was the front. Compare this with the picture on page 13.



The dressing room hall. This is located near the gym, with what used to be the dressing room doors on the left. The door at the end of the hall used to be a window before the gym was added in 1965 and it was covered up.



The lower foyer. This is an interesting area because of its many changes in the walls. Notice the large arches at the end of the room. The bulletin board beyond covers part of the remains of another 2 arches. There are hooks for coats here that have been part of the school for all the time it has been around.



Dressing room windows. Or, at least they were. The one on the right was beside the door in the dressing room hall. The gym hall is on the other side of the wall.



This is room 1. Now it is the family centre. The entrance to this wild maze of odd hallways is on the right of the picture of the lower foyer. Inside the near door is a storage room with counters on either side, and sinks in the counters. The far door leads to the actual classroom.



This is the actual room one. The far door in this picture is the far door in the picture of the outside of the storage room.



Some windows of Rm.1. These face out onto Queens Drive. Note the inner arch above each window. All of the basement windows in the school are like that.



The old front. Compare with the picture on page 9. Does it appear to you that the school got squished from the top and the front?



The original entrance on Queens Drive. When the steps were removed, the storage room was put in.



Another view of the original entrance. Notice the paint splatter (top of old door, left) and the sagging brickwork.



The side of the original section, with some notable windows. A cloakroom window (upper left), office window (left centre), 3 room one windows (lower left), and not a window, but the sign saying GIRLS (top centre).



A mysterious door. This door, located in the lower foyer, is used to get at the plumbing for the girls' washroom, which is on the other side of this thick wall.



The former girls' door. Note the bricked in semicircular window (above door).



The huge window in the former boys' stairwell. All of the windows were of this size panes originally.



This shows the same window from the outside. Note the cloakroom window (top floor, right) and the closed in one (middle floor, below the other one).



Another angle of the window. This shows the gym on the right, and the outdoor storage on the left (bottom).

JOINING OF SECTIONS

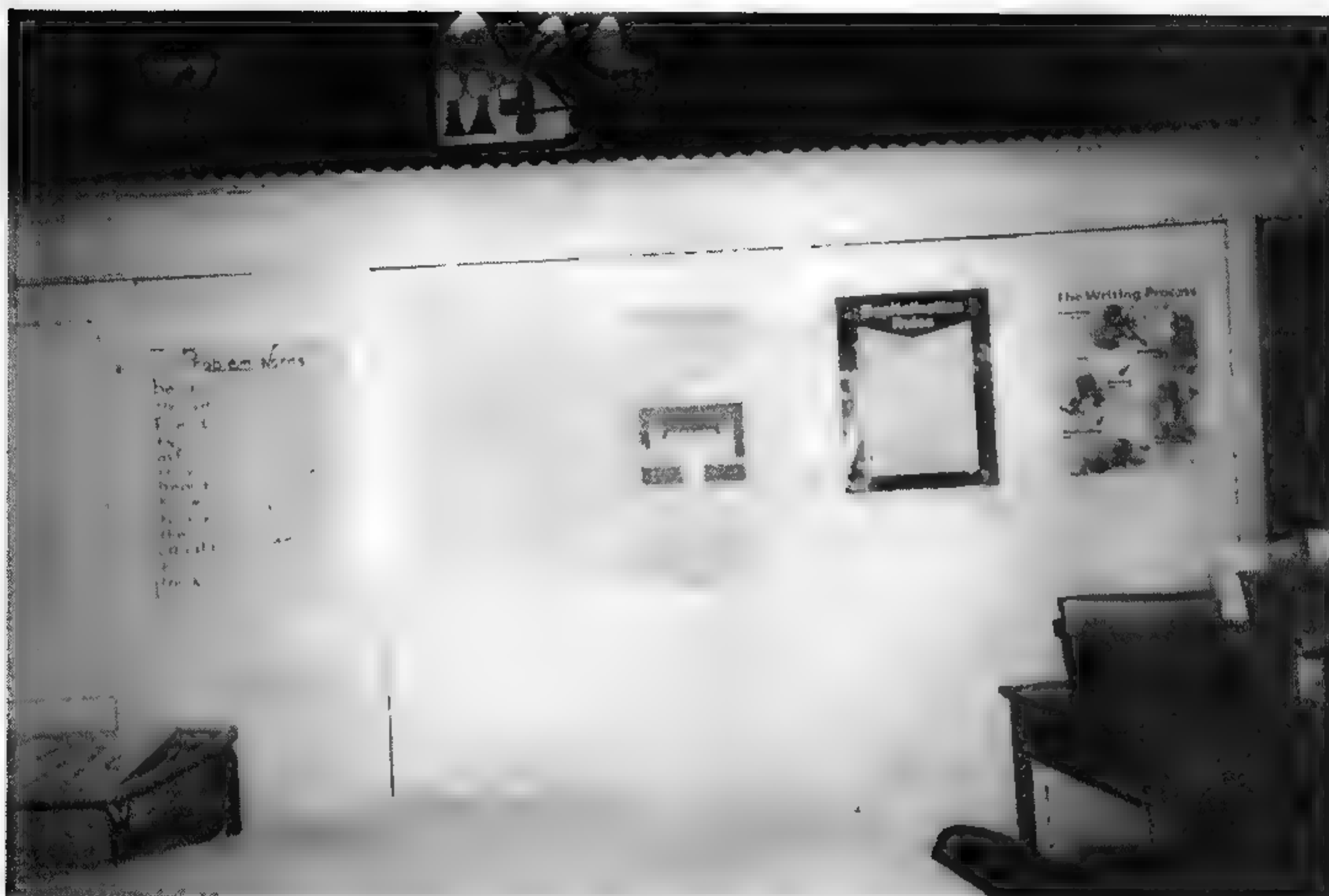


This shows where the 1919 and 1929 sections join. The 1929 section is on the right (John Street side), and the 1919 building is on the left. The '29 section was joined to the back of the 1919 building.

1929



This is the outside of the 1929 addition on the former girls' side. It is identical to the back section of the 1919 building.



These are the typical cloakroom doors in the 1929 section. Unlike the 1919 cloakrooms, the 1929 ones are just cupboards, really.

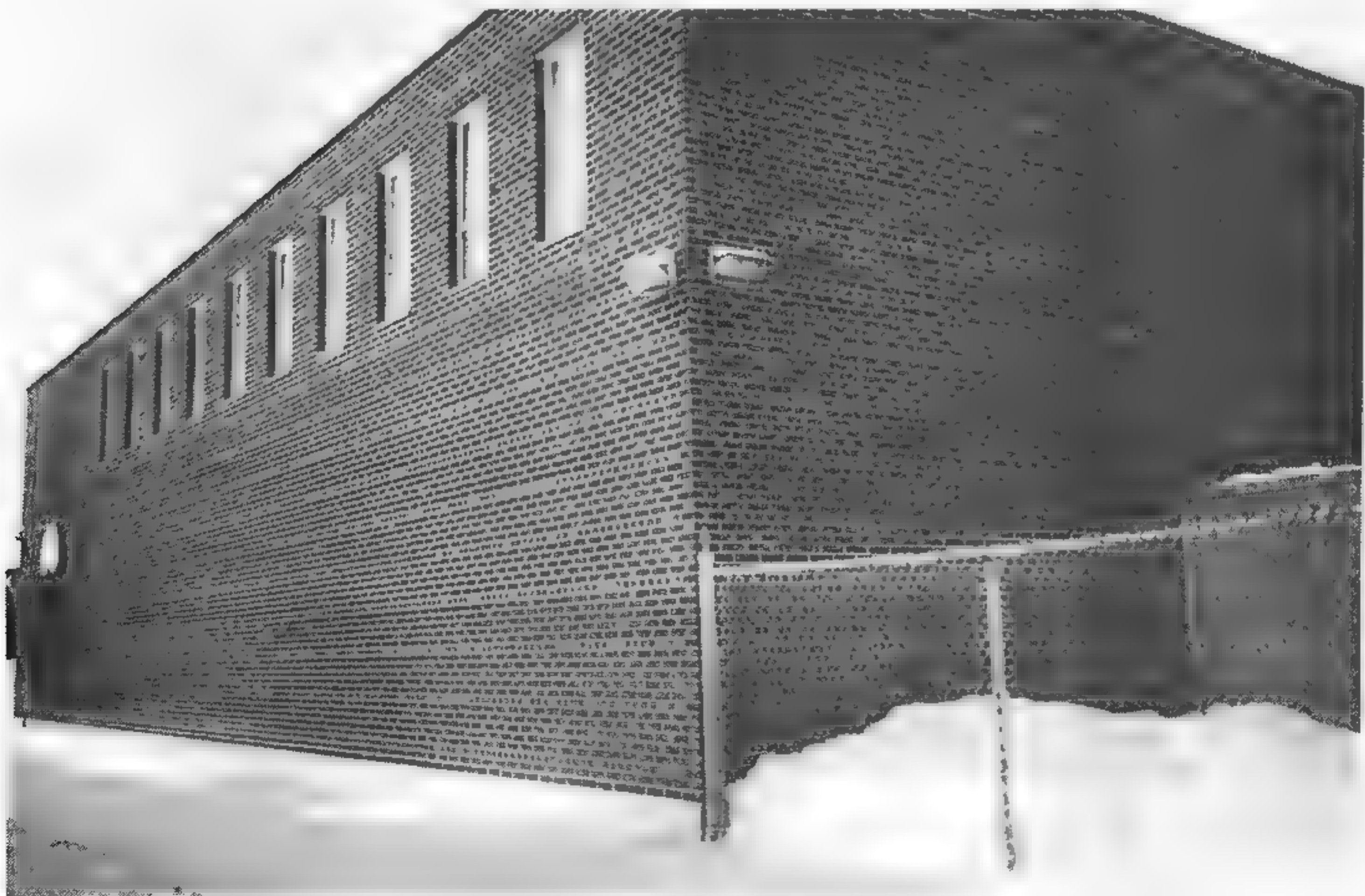
GYM-1965



This is the inside of the gym. You can see the stage at the other end. Note the speakers (grey strips on either side of stage).



The outside of the gym. You can see the 1919 section, which is attached, in the background.



Another view of the outside of the gym. The side on the right of the picture faces Queens Drive.

1968



The outside of the 1968 addition. Note where the 1929 addition joins the 1968 section.



A typical 1968 addition classroom. Note the closets at the back.

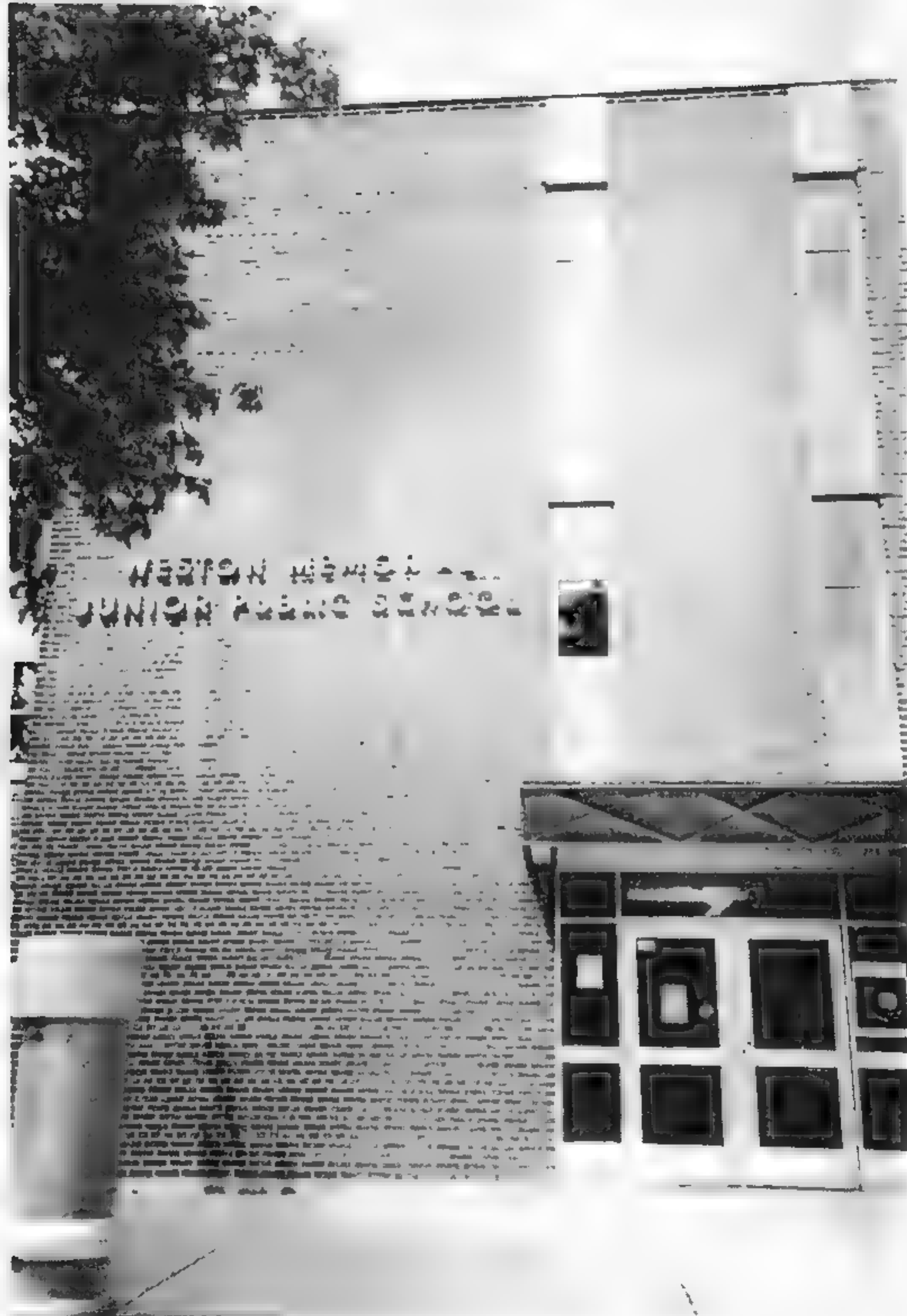


This is the John Street end of the school. The windows on either side of the front door area are the windows of the classrooms of the 1968 addition. The two lower floor classrooms are kindergartens. Note the old kindergarten door (right side, lower left corner).



The inside of one of the kindergartens. Note the P.A. speaker (top centre).

JOHN STREET ENTRANCE



This is the John Street entrance. It was built in the late 1960s. Inside, it has a stairwell and a landing on each floor.

P.A. SYSTEM



This is the P.A. unit in the office. The microphone is sitting on top. It has a built-in tape player and an intercom.



This is a close-up of a P.A. speaker in one of the classrooms in the 1968 addition.



This is the amplifier in the gym. It has 2 microphones, and can be used with a tape player as well.

CHANGES AND ALTERATIONS



This is the lower foyer. The two arches say two things: The ceiling has been lowered drastically, and there are more arches where they came from.

The bulletin board beyond the arch on the left that says "BEFORE AND SCHOOL" is covering some of the cement blocks that filled in an arch in the wall, just like these two.



This is the wall on the inside of the original front entrance. It is part of the library now. Before, it would have been some doors with a window above them, and a hall through the centre with a classroom on either side.



This is a classroom door in the 1929 section. The square of wood above the door used to be a transom. The teacher could open it for some fresh air circulation if the door was closed.



This picture shows a place where there used to be a window. In 1968, when this part of the school was built, there was a window here and when they built the John Street entrance, it covered up this area, so they filled the window with cement blocks.



There used to be a semicircular window here, but when the gym was built, they took it away.



There used to be a door here for the kindergartens (centre of photo). When the John Street entrance was built, this was filled in and by the shape of the filling, I'd say they had a bit of trouble getting the door frame out!



Three former windows in the former girls' dressing room. There were four windows in this row, but the fourth one became a door to get to the hallway of the gym. The others were closed in because the gym hallway wall was there.

WINDOWS



This window was overlooked when the 1929 section was built. It was at the end of one of the cloakrooms. It still has the original size window panes, and although it's painted to match the wall, you can imagine being able to look out onto John Street and the backyard of the school.



The huge window in the former boys' stairwell. It still has the original size panes and is my favourite window.



A cloakroom window. This window is one of three of its kind remaining in the school; one is in the office, and two are in cloakrooms.

PORTABLE CLASSROOM



The outside of the portable, brought to the school in the autumn of 1991. This portable left in the summer of 1993. Weston Memorial has had other portables, but they were made of wood and they were chilly in winter.



The inside of the portable during the school year 1992-93.



The nurse's office. Although there is no nurse at the school now, there is still the nurse's office. It has a desk, two couches and a table. Originally, though, there was a school nurse.



This is one of the few remaining transoms. It is above a cloakroom door, which is where most of the remaining transoms are.



A classroom heating vent. There was an iron ring attached to the wall in the cloakroom by a chain. When the chain was pulled, there was a huge grinding noise in the wall, and this vent opened and let hot air in from the boiler room.



The boiler. This giant boiler is mounted in a two foot deep hole. This hole is lined with bricks from 1919, when the original boiler was put in this exact spot. Originally, it had a hopper for coal and the caretaker had to come in early in the mornings to stoke the fire before the school day started. There was a coal bin near the boiler, which is now a storage room.



The roof hatch. This is in a cloakroom on the top floor. It has a ladder that folds down, so you can climb up, push through the hatch, and be on the roof.



The primary lunchroom. The ceiling is the focus in this picture. It is one of the original tin ceilings that most of the rooms in the school had when it was built in 1919.

THANK YOU



I would like to thank the following people for helping me:

Mrs. Mary Louise Ashbourne
Mr. Ben Case
Mr. Bruce Chapman
Mrs. Edna Chapman
Mr. A. Stewart Hill
Mrs. Helen (Lawrence) Inch
Mr. Ken Lake
Mr. Norman McLaughlin
Mrs. Marjorie Mossman
Mrs. Beverley Preston (my mom)
Mr. Bruce Preston (my dad)
Mrs. Bonnie Taylor

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Steven Preston, a 12 year old Grade 6 student who graduated from Weston Memorial Junior School in June of 1993, became interested in the history of his school because he liked the look of the building. So, when he was in Grade 4 and was 10 years old, he began taking and collecting pictures of Weston Memorial, both interior and exterior views. All but two of the photos in this book, therefore, were taken by the author. Through interviewing various people, asking lots of questions, doing research at the library and taking tours of the school building, Steven has collected a great deal of the history of this building which he has put together in this most interesting book. Steven lives in Weston with his parents and younger brother, Jeffrey.

* Cover picture printed with the kind permission of Weston Memorial School Archives

* Picture on page 9 printed with the kind permission of The Weston Historical Society.

